

## ANTH205 (Special ENGR Sections) Cultural Diversity & Ethics

Sec 901-904 Tues 2:15 – 3:30pm EABA121

Sec 905-908 Thur 2:15 – 3:30pm EABA121

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Sec 901: Wed 8am – 9:15am ANTH237

Sec 902: Wed 9:35am – 10:50am ANTH237

Sec 903: Wed 11:10am – 12:25pm ANTH27

Sec 904: Wed 12:45pm – 2:00pm ANTH237

Sec 905: Fri 8:00am – 9:15am ANTH237

Sec 906: Fri 9:35am – 10:50pm ANTH237

Sec 907: Fri 11:10am – 12:25pm ANTH237

Sec 908: Fri 12:45pm – 2:00pm ANTH237



### **Course Description**

This course, purposefully designed for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) majors, uses real-world examples and case studies to explore the diverse nature of human culture and ethics globally. In this writing intensive ('W'), collaborative and reflective class we will use an anthropological mindset to assess and address the sociocultural impacts of engineering and other types of projects in global settings. We will develop the critical-thinking skills needed to effectively examine how and why people across the globe are both different and alike. More specifically this course may challenge your assumptions of what is 'normal'. This course would be especially beneficial to any person intending to work or live in any culturally diverse or international environment.

**Course Prerequisites:** Senior or Junior Classification or the approval of the instructor.

### **Why Anthropology?**

Anthropology, and its sub-discipline Archeology, is the holistic study of humanity both past and present. Anthropology is a very diverse subject and discipline—it is the perfect choice for anyone who loves to have their fingers in lots of pies! That is because anthropology is a meta-discipline; a meta-discipline that integrates knowledge generated from lots of different disciplines such as philosophy, history, economics, business, psychology, sociology, political science, gender and minority studies, as well as traditional hard sciences like geography, computer science, biology, chemistry, and physics. At Texas A&M University, in addition to having an Anthropology Department, anthropologists are faculty in numerous other departments including Recreation, Parks and Tourism, Architecture, Health Sciences, and International Studies. For STEM majors, the meta-discipline of anthropology provides an ideal window to the wonderfully diverse nature of humanity.

Instructor: Dr. Catharina Laporte

Office: ANTH 224

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 12:30pm-2pm, or by appointment, or just drop by and visit!

Telephone: Anthropology Main Office (979) 845 5242 Email: [claporte@tamu.edu](mailto:claporte@tamu.edu)

### **Course Objectives**

This course will:

- ❖ Demonstrate how ethics and morality can be culturally constructed, and how cultural diversity impacts ethics in real-world settings.
- ❖ Illustrate how adopting a holistic or social science mindset may change the initially perceived parameters (boundary or frame) of a problem, project or program.
- ❖ Illustrate how problems are not always black and white, with right or wrong answers.
- ❖ Prepare for working in diverse, international or multicultural environments
- ❖ Develop written and verbal communication, and critical thinking skills.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

On the successful completion of this course the student will:

- ❖ Critically appraise how their worldview and personal ethic shapes the decisions they make.
- ❖ Identify, explain and discuss the concepts of ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, critical cultural relativism, worldview, ethos (spirit of the culture), axiology (what is valued) and epistemology (how we know what we know).
- ❖ Formulate or hypothesize how these concepts (listed above) apply to their chosen discipline or subject of interest.
- ❖ Investigate, compare and debate how different cultural or ethical perspectives may change the perceived framework of a problem or project.

### **Course Structure**

This course meets two times a week. The first meeting of the week is a section of no more than 100 students. The second meeting of the week, led by a teaching assistant, is a smaller group of no more than 25 students.

Weekly learning modules will be put on eCampus (see below) and students are expected to have completed these modules *prior to the first class meeting of the week*. The course, and its modules, is structured in a way that acknowledges that students have different learning styles. Each module will have some time devoted different modes of learning: watching, listening and doing. Additionally, the course is structured to allow for more active learning and interaction with the instructor, the community and other students. For example, you will be actively researching materials that contribute to class discussions, and we will often have guest speakers in class.

### **Modules and Class Technology**

**eCampus:** This class will extensively use TAMU eCampus ([ecampus.tamu.edu](http://ecampus.tamu.edu)), and all resources will be available there, including assignments, readings, discussions etc. There is no textbook.

**Modules:** This class is broken down into weekly modules. The entire module's information, including readings, videos, downloads and assignments will be available via eCampus. You are expected to complete the module online before the first class meeting of the week. Information delivered in the module will be discussed in class, and will be the subject matter for class discussions, workshops and exercises.

**Paper and Pencil/Pen:** it is essential that you always bring paper and a pencil or pen to all class meetings. At times you will be required to write, share and submit work in class.

**WiFi Technology:** In this class we will be using your handheld devices (such as smart phones, tablets, iPhones etc.) and/or your tablets or laptops as means of actively participating in class activities. You will be required to install small free apps on your device to communicate in the classroom. If you do not have a WiFi device, laptops are available to checkout, free, from the TAMU library.



In respect of the learning environment,  
electronic devices may only be used  
for class related activities!

## Course Assessment

There will be no formal exams in this class. Grades will be based on the assessments listed below.

### Quick Test or Task (QT)

In order to assess your comprehension and knowledge, and to give you the opportunity to explore the module concepts in more depth, ten quick tests or tasks (QT) will be dispersed throughout the semester. Quick tests will be conducted in class, and will have five or less questions and last no longer than ten minutes. Tasks will be assigned via the modules and be required to be submitted either in class or via eCampus at dates indicated on the class schedule. The two lowest QT scores will be dropped and the resulting sum will constitute 32% (8 x 4%) of your final grade.

### Critical Reflection Journals and Responses (RJ/RJR)

To promote the exchange of ideas and a critical appreciation for other people's thoughts and concepts in a written format, you will be required to submit five critical reflections (of approximately 250-300 words) on eCampus. Think of this as a scholarly diary entry where you are reflecting upon the course content, what we have viewed and discussed in class, together with the information presented in the modules.

For each RJ assignment, you are also required to respond (RJR) to at least two other team member's RJ with your own unique thoughts or perspectives (no less than 150 words): remember to be respectful and scholarly in your submissions.

Due dates for RJs and RJRs are indicated on the class schedule. Everyone RJ#1 will be graded. After that, half will be randomly chosen to be graded, such that each student will have three RJ/RJR assignments graded by the end of the semester. A grading rubric will be provided on eCampus. These grades collectively constitute 18% (3 x 6%) of your overall grade.

### Final Project (FP)

In effort to analyze, apply and synthesize the material learned in this class, provide a legitimate networking opportunity, and improve your written, verbal, and critical thinking skills, you will produce a Final Project (FP). For this assignment you will conduct an open ended interview of a person in an industry of your choice and report on how cultural diversity and/or ethics impacts their daily lives. This will be an ongoing semester long effort honed in the small class meetings. The final product will be approximately 1500 words (5-6 pages), although you can select the format and audience yourself (governmental report, story for a popular press magazine, etc.). Your FP will be outlined, drafted, practiced, reviewed, reworked and informally presented in our smaller class meeting. Your FP will be assessed in stages with due dates detailed in the Class Schedule on final page of this syllabus: Written Proposal (5%); Interim Project Checkpoint (5%); First draft and peer review (15%); and Final Project (15%). A grading rubric and more specific instructions will be provided in class. Your FP will constitute 40% of your overall grade.

### Participation in class, eCampus Modules and/or use of technologies in class

This course is designed to foster learning through individual investigation and interaction with others. Your participation is a critical element to the success of everyone in the class. This portion of your final grade will be determined by the quality of your active participation in class. Participation accounts for 10% of your overall grade.

Final Project (FP):	40%
Reflection Journals and responses (RJ) (3):	18%
Quick Tasks (QT) (8):	32%
Participation:	<u>10%</u>
	100%

A=90-100; B=80-89.9; C=70-79.9; D=60-69.9; F=Below 60

**Extremely Important:** If you fail the writing portion of the class, you will receive a failing grade for the whole course. Written work accounts for 90% of your final grade. Therefore, it is extremely important that you turn in your best work on all written assignments.

## Course Policies

Attendance: Attending the class is the responsibility of the student and no formal attendance will be taken. That being said, this is a collaborative and interactive class; a large portion of your assessment will be based on work conducted in class—if you miss those activities, undoubtedly your grades will suffer.

Makeup Policy: Students are responsible for knowing the course schedule and assignment due dates outlined in this syllabus. For assignments that are missed due to absences, please refer to Student Rule 7 (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>) for details concerning which absences are excused. Students with excused absences must provide written notification prior to the date of the absence, or in cases where advanced notification is not possible, within two working days following the absence. If you do have a university-excused absence please contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange a makeup schedule.

Assignments missed due to unexcused absences will receive a zero (remember that the two lowest QT scores will be dropped). Due to the collaborative nature of assignments in this course and the logistics of peer review, late projects will receive a grade of zero unless supported by an approved university absence.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

#### Plagiarism and Cheating

Students are bound by the Aggie honor code not to lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do. If you violate the code (e.g., by plagiarizing something or cheating) there will be no second chances—you will receive a zero for the assignment and may receive an F for the class. Plagiarism is my 'pet peeve'! All cases of plagiarism and cheating will be handled according to university policies. For further information on cheating and plagiarism, go to <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>.

#### Ground Rules (aka Classroom Etiquette).

Throughout the course, you are likely to encounter new ideas through the course materials, and you will learn to look at old ideas in new ways. We will be reading and discussing material that may challenge the way you think about things, both academically and personally. We need to remain open-minded and listen to one another; above all, it is crucial to maintain respect in all classroom interactions. Second, it is important that you show respect to others by arriving to class on time and by only using smart or cell phones, computers and other communication devices for class related activities.

## Class Schedule

	Module	Date	In Class (First meeting of the week)	Date	In Class (2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the week)
	1		Instructor Introduction Syllabus and technology review		Student introductions Exercise: Syllabus Gant Chart
Fundamentals	2		The Engineering and Scientific Methods... Why Anthropology?		Role Play: Water boiling in a small village
	3		What is Holism? What is Culture? What is Ethnocentrism? <b>Do: QT#1 Due: RJ#1</b>		Exercise: Anthropology in practice - Observing and Interviewing the other <b>Due: RJRs#1</b>
	4		Introducing Your Final Project (FP) Guest Speaker: Diversity and Learned Ignorance <b>Do: QT#2</b>		What is, and why support, diversity?
	5		Paradigms & Epistemology <b>Do: QT#3 Due: RJ#2</b>		Student Film Engaging in Meta-reflexivity <b>Due: RJRs#2</b>
	6		What is Ethics? <b>Do: QT#4</b>		Exercise: Creating a Code of Ethics <b>Due: FP Proposal</b>
Ethics	7		The Code of Ethics in your discipline. What is valued and why? What results? Worldview <b>Do: QT#5 Due: RJ#3</b>		TAMU Writing Center FP workshop <b>Due: RJRs#3</b>
	8		Critical Cultural Relativism Guest Speaker: Hot Houses in Guatemala <b>Do: QT#6</b>		Exploring Definitions & Perspectives Role Play: Unintended 'Sticky' Consequences <b>Due: Interim Checkpoint of FP</b>
Problem Solving	9		Fractious Problem Solving (FPS) & Responsible Innovation <b>Do: QT#7 Due: RJ#4</b>		Exercise: Analyzing Fractious Problems <b>Due: RJRs#4</b>
Different Ways of Thinking	10		Myths, naturalistic fallacies and assumptions <b>Do: QT#8</b>		Exercise: Whistle blowing
	11		Technological Determinism & Cultural Construction of Technology. <b>Due: RJ#5</b>		TAMU Writing Center Workshop: Mechanics of writing <b>Due: RJRs#5</b>
	12		Bribery, corruption, nepotism, gifts, and grease payments <b>Do: QT#9</b>		Workshop: Peer Review of FP <b>Due: First Draft of FP</b>
	13		Risk, harm, (in) equality and the environment Guest Speaker: Emic perspectives on Nuclear Energy <b>Do: QT#10</b>		Guided discussion: ❖ Displacement for large sporting events ❖ Bhopal or Chernobyl disaster ❖ Ship breaking in Bangladesh
	14		Final Wrap up		<b>Due: Final Version of FP</b> <b>Do: Final Presentations</b>